



## FACT SHEET

January 2019

### CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO KIDS (CalWORKs) HOME VISITING INITIATIVE



#### **PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM:**

The purpose of the CalWORKs Home Visiting Initiative (HVI) is to support positive health, development and well-being outcomes for pregnant and parenting women, families and infants born into poverty. The HVI will expand opportunities for future education, economic and financial capability for participants, improving the likelihood they will exit poverty. The program will improve family engagement practices, support healthy development of young children living in poverty, and prepare parents for employment.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

CalWORKs: The CalWORKs program provides temporary cash assistance to meet basic family needs, as well as education, employment and training programs to assist the family's move toward self-sufficiency.

Leveraging home visiting services into the CalWORKs program presents a unique opportunity to promote two-generation policies that meet the needs of parents and their children.

Home visiting is an evidence-based, culturally competent, voluntary program model that pairs new parents with a nurse or other trained professional who makes regular visits to the participant's home to provide guidance, coaching, access to prenatal and postnatal care, and other health and social services.

HVI supports and resources will include but not be limited to: (1) prenatal, infant and toddler care; (2) infant and child nutrition; (3) child developmental screening and assessments; (4) parent education, and training in parent/child interaction; (5) child development and child care; (6) job readiness and barrier removal; (7) domestic violence and sexual assault services; and (8) mental health and substance abuse treatment and support.

Home visitors will encourage participants to enroll their child in high-quality early learning settings or participate in playgroups or other child enrichment activities. Parent participation in early learning settings will count towards allowable activities under a welfare-to-work plan.

Counties may establish processes, in coordination with home visitors and CalWORKs staff, to provide one-time, as-needed funding not to exceed \$500 for the purchase of material goods for a participant's

household related to care, health, and safety of the child and family.

#### **FUNDING:**

Senate Bill 840 (Budget Act of 2018) appropriated approximately \$26.9 million for the first program period, January 1, 2019-June 30, 2019. Assembly Bill 1811 (Human Services Omnibus) codified the requirements for the HVI.

Subject to continuing appropriation in the annual Budget Act, the department will award funds to participating counties who apply biennially and meet the minimum requirements established by CDSS. Funds appropriated may be used in combination with funding from other sources.

CDSS will allocate funds to participating counties to provide voluntary evidence-based home visiting services to families meeting eligibility criteria. Counties will provide the Department with a plan and description of how they will accomplish the program's goals.

#### **ELIGIBLE POPULATION:**

To be eligible for home visiting services a participant must be a member of a CalWORKs assistance unit who is pregnant with no other children at the time of enrollment, or a first-time parent or caretaker relative of a child less than twenty-four months old at the time of enrollment in the HVI.

A county may serve additional individuals not described above so long as the county offers home visiting to all individuals in the target population. Participation is optional for CalWORKs clients. Participation does not affect a family's application for aid or eligibility for any other CalWORKs benefits, supports or services such as welfare-to-work exemptions.

A member of the assistance unit need not be eligible for, nor is required to participate in, the Welfare-to-Work program to receive home visiting services.

#### **EVALUATION:**

The Department of Social Services will work with counties and other stakeholders, including independent, research-based institutions, to establish outcome and process measures to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the HVI.